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New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support: causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum 66/287

I. Rationale

1. The present addendum is submitted pursuant to paragraph 27 of General Assembly resolution 66/287. The interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 57/7. In response to that mandate, the Secretary-General, in his bulletin ST/SGB/2003/6, established the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, with the mandate to:

- Enhance international support for Africa's development and security through its advocacy and analytical work
- Assist the Secretary-General in improving coherence and coordination of the United Nations system support to Africa
- Facilitate intergovernmental deliberations on Africa at the global level, in particular relating to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)

2. The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/300, endorsed the recommendation of the Secretary-General to entrust this task to an office at the level of Under-Secretary-General that would, inter alia, coordinate the interdepartmental task force on African affairs to ensure coherence and an integrated approach for United Nations support to Africa, including following up the implementation of all summit and conference outcomes related to Africa and addressing gaps and initiating reports on critical issues affecting Africa.

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3. With these two resolutions and the Secretary-General's bulletin, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa was given a specific mandate to ensure coherence and coordination in United Nations support to Africa and, in particular, to ensure that there is a clear nexus between peace, security and development work of the United Nations. Various departments and agencies in the United Nations system have specific social, economic, human rights, humanitarian and development mandates, while others have a clear peace and security mandate.

4. As the Secretary-General states in his report entitled "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all", as the world's only universal body with a mandate to address security, development and human rights issues, the United Nations bears a special burden (A/59/2005, para. 21). The Organization has to ensure that all these components are simultaneously and comprehensively addressed since, as the Secretary-General states in his report, not only are development, security and human rights all imperative; they also reinforce each other (ibid., para. 16).

5. In this context, the added value and specificity of the mandate of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa is to bridge the gap in the work of the United Nations system in the fields of peace, development and human rights (including humanitarian assistance), and ensure coordination and coherence of the United Nations support to Africa.

6. To fulfil this mandate and facilitate its cooperation with other entities in the Secretariat, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa is a member of and participates in the meetings of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Group. It also participates in regional consultative meetings, including the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, which is entrusted with ensuring the implementation of the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union. The Regional Coordination Mechanism has nine thematic clusters spanning a range of peace and development issues, in which members of the task force participate at the regional level. The Economic Commission for Africa convenes the Regional Coordination Mechanism in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa chairs the coordination and advocacy cluster.

7. Recognition has grown that African challenges straddle the divide between peace, security, development and humanitarian and human rights. The Constitutive Act of the African Union and the NEPAD founding document both underline the need to promote peace, security and stability, and the respect of human rights as a prerequisite for the implementation of the development agenda. The international community, and the United Nations in particular, have come to recognize that peace, stability, respect for human rights and development are intertwined, and that there is a need to ensure that the peace and development agendas are addressed comprehensively and simultaneously.

8. Despite this new dynamism, difficulties persist in operationalizing the linkages between peace, security and development. However, challenges on the continent, particularly in fragile and post-conflict countries such as Somalia, South Sudan, Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic and Guinea-Bissau, show more than ever the need for greater coherence in

the United Nations work in supporting Africa's peace, security and development agenda.

9. Indeed, new and emerging challenges in Africa, such as piracy, terrorism and transnational organized crime, including human trafficking and weapons and drug smuggling, show the clear linkages between the social and economic problems of exclusion and marginalization. Land degradation, desertification and climate change, illegal exploitation of natural resources, inequality and youth unemployment are increasingly becoming sources of social and communal conflicts, and are exacerbated by organized crime, weak law enforcement and the breakdown of the rule of law. Given the growing complexity and intertwined nature of peace, development and human rights issues, the United Nations interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs is uniquely placed to coordinate and bring coherence to United Nations support to Africa as mandated by Member States.

10. With the recent appointment of the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa, the task of creating greater coherence, synergy and coordination between the peace, security, human rights, humanitarian and development activities of the United Nations system will be at the top of the agenda of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa. Furthermore, there is greater need to ensure that the follow-up to major conferences, meetings and commitments made to Africa take into consideration the nexus between peace, development and human rights issues. Consequently, there is a clear necessity to strengthen the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs and better clarify its work throughout the United Nations system.

11. At present, the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs is the source of the inputs into three of the Secretary-General's reports on Africa, namely:

- New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support
- Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa
- United Nations system support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development

12. The interdepartmental/inter-agency task force was also instrumental in deliberations leading to the adoption by the General Assembly of its resolution 66/293, establishing a United Nations Monitoring Mechanism to review commitments made towards Africa's development.

13. In addition to these elements, the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force has been the backbone of major joint meetings, including the 2008 high-level meeting on Africa's development needs, and several expert group meetings on a variety of topics straddling the nexus between peace, development and human rights.

14. However, despite the recent gains made, certain United Nations activities aimed at addressing Africa's peace, development and human rights challenges could benefit from better coordination and coherence. In this context, the General Assembly, in paragraph 27 of its resolution 66/287, requested the Secretary-General to submit recommendations to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on possible ways to strengthen the interdepartmental task force on African affairs in order to

ensure further coherence and an integrated approach for United Nations support for Africa, including in following up the implementation of all global summit and conference outcomes related to Africa.

15. In order to strengthen the work of the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs, the Secretary-General proposes to institutionalize its work and role by outlining below clear terms of reference and areas of work, structure and meetings.

16. This structure does not require additional resources or a new mandate. It will give direction to the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and define its role more clearly as the Office that advises the Secretary-General on matters relating to the linkages between Africa's peace, development and human rights needs, and has the convening power, as mandated by Member States, to bring together all entities in the United Nations system to coordinate and bring coherence to the United Nations work in support of Africa.

II. Proposed measures to strengthen the work of the task force

17. The main role of the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs shall be to serve as the mechanism through which the Secretary-General, in accordance with the mandate given to the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, can improve coherence and coordination of the United Nations system support to Africa, and particularly to ensure that there is a clear nexus between peace, security and development.

18. The task force shall accomplish this task by:

(a) Facilitating greater coordination in the preparation of four reports of the Secretary-General on Africa, namely,

- New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support
- Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa
- United Nations system support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development
- Monitoring mechanism to review commitments towards Africa's development

(b) Promoting and, where possible, undertaking joint activities across thematic, regional and specialized divisions;

(c) Undertaking joint advocacy for international support to Africa, and African initiatives in partnership with relevant actors (the United Nations, civil society, the private sector, the media, academia and parliamentarians) and, specifically, championing approaches and solutions that take into account the nexus between peace, security and development in Africa;

(d) Assisting in the mobilization of support for the implementation of relevant programmes and initiatives in Africa in the areas straddling the peace, security and development nexus;

(e) Providing a sounding board to Members to test and provide feedback on approaches to achieve integration of programmatic actions across agency thematic areas of focus and a framework for the United Nations system to exchange information and best practices on activities on the continent in order to increase coherence and coordination;

(f) Serving as a mechanism to promote best practices in the field of peace, development and human rights, and to promote the creation of necessary synergies to benefit all the thematic areas;

(g) Providing a platform to discuss and share lessons learned from the results and development impact of key United Nations programmes and projects implemented in Africa, and formulate system-wide responses and recommendations to African Member States on the way forward, for example in the context of the post-2015 development agenda and in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;

(h) Assisting in coordinating United Nations system-wide support to Africa and in the follow-up to major international conferences and processes, such as the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20.

19. In addition to the regular reports and briefings, a work programme will be developed annually and will outline activities to be jointly organized by task force members, as well as goals and projected benchmarks for success. These activities shall be cross-cutting and related to the current peace, development and human rights work of the United Nations on Africa.

20. The work programme will aim at identifying approaches, linkages and opportunities for joint action that would best contribute to optimal results and greater impact. It will also serve to more effectively help plan the work and inputs of the interdepartmental/inter-agency task force.

21. The work programme will be based on Africa's development objectives and United Nations commitments regarding support to Africa. The interdepartmental/inter-agency task force on African affairs will have two working groups, the economic and social development working group, and the peace and security, human rights and democratic governance working group. Their task will be to ensure that in their respective reports and activities, clear linkages are made between peace, development and human rights issues, including humanitarian assistance.